

Basic Human Needs Fund for Baltimore

Background

While the state unemployment rate in Maryland is 6.9%, a 17 year high, it is much higher in Baltimore, where one in four people live in poverty. Although the formal unemployment rate for the city is 10.4%, this figure does not count people on welfare, people who are released from the criminal justice system (9,000 per year), discouraged workers who are no longer seeking work, and students who have dropped out of school. In the many Baltimore neighborhoods characterized by concentrated poverty—and comprised almost entirely of African-American families—a more accurate unemployment rate is 40%-50%. These neighborhoods are home to people on whom our work focuses—individuals and families who, because of poverty and historical and ongoing racial discrimination, have limited education, job skills, sources of legitimate income, housing security and access to healthcare, including addiction treatment. Efforts to earn income through participation in drug markets have resulted in extensive criminal histories, adding yet another barrier to their employment in the formal labor market.

The economic downturn has exacerbated their instability. Foreclosures directly affect some; more frequently, though, they are forced to move from rentals in a foreclosed building. Further, the marginal stability of those in the community who constituted the “working poor” disappears with job lay-offs. Not only do these anchors of the community lose income and insurance but they may also develop new health problems, including addiction, with the added stress and lack of care. Young people are particularly affected as their families increasingly turn to them to provide income and as private and public programs to ensure their safety and achievement are cut back. Indeed, as state and local governments seek to balance their budgets, the limited safety net for the poor may become even more stretched, directly affecting the well-being of families throughout the city. While some poor people can become relatively stable through direct assistance to secure employment and public benefits, others will need the sustained assistance of the safety net organizations to gain economic stability.

In this scenario, a Basic Human Needs Fund can play a critical role in ensuring the immediate health, economic security and safety of Baltimore’s poorest residents. In the following section, *we recommend that we award Basic Human Needs funds in areas in which the Baltimore office has considerable familiarity, expertise and experience.* Coupled with OSI-Baltimore’s ongoing advocacy to achieve lasting systemic change, the Basic Human Needs Fund also provides another opportunity to use the economic crisis to highlight the beneficial results and cost-effectiveness of re-allocating government funds to provide earlier and more constructive interventions (rather than deep-end, last resort measures). Specifically, our complementary advocacy activities would emphasize: 1) the public health benefits and cost savings of expanded addiction treatment; 2) the savings, achievement, career preparation and improved nutrition and safety that results from keeping youth engaged in school and in out-of-school activities; and 3) the impact of re-entry activities to reduce recidivism, develop a trained workforce, address underlying problems such as addiction, and improve parenting.

Budget and Program Priorities

Over two years, the Basic Human Needs Fund would distribute \$14,380,000 in grants in Baltimore. The fund would focus on the following four categories and support one small grants pooled fund:

- A. Employment opportunities for low-income adults, especially people with criminal convictions, immigrants, people in recovery, adults working to keep youth safe and engaged in educational and career preparation activities, and community residents engaged in stabilizing and revitalizing neighborhoods through “green” methods and technology (\$5,600,000)
- B. Employment opportunities for older youth and re-engagement of school drop-outs, as preparation for work as adults and as an alternative to employment in drug markets (\$3,350,000)
- C. Healthcare for people who are drug-dependent or who are homeless (\$2,880,000)
- D. Improved access to public benefits and to legal services relating to housing, public benefits, and employment (\$1,350,000)
- E. Small grants pooled fund to assist vulnerable Baltimoreans (\$1,200,000)

Grantmaking Logistics

OSI-Baltimore support from the Basic Needs Fund would be matched 1:1 by private or public monies. Recipients would have the onus for raising the match so that it will not “compete” with OSI-Baltimore’s fundraising campaign. That said, OSI-Baltimore staff have already done the initial due diligence to establish that the proposed matching requirements are realistic.

Grantees would be a range of Baltimore non-profit organizations that have the capacity to act quickly and at a significant scale. They would also include, as appropriate, organizations founded by Baltimore Community Fellows that, in collaboration or alone, are meeting the housing, food/nutrition and employment needs of Baltimore’s most vulnerable residents. While OSI-Baltimore generally will use its detailed knowledge of the community to solicit proposals from particular organizations, OSI-Baltimore will collaborate with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to support a small grants program to meet basic human needs administered by Associated Black Charities. And, after further exploration, OSI-Baltimore may opt to participate in “affinity groups” established by the city to pair private funds with Community Service Block Grant, Local Energy Efficiency Block Grant and Weatherization funds from the federal government to create jobs and meet other basic needs of low-income residents.

OSI would employ a consultant with grantmaking experience in Baltimore to work with the program directors to conduct the due diligence and make grant recommendations. The OSI-Baltimore Advisory Board would review and approve the grant dockets, drawing on their considerable knowledge of local needs and capacity to make funding decisions. A member of the OSI-Baltimore Board Grants Committee would also serve on the OSI national advisory committee for the Basic Human Needs Fund to share ideas and provide guidance.

Proposed Grantmaking

The following are *examples* of grantmaking opportunities that we would consider for the Basic Human Needs Fund for Baltimore. These are based on our knowledge of programs within the city that would be able to utilize funds immediately to serve our most vulnerable residents.

A) Employment opportunities for adults, especially people with criminal convictions, immigrants, people in recovery, adults working to keep youth safe and engaged in educational and career preparation activities, and community residents engaged in stabilizing and revitalizing neighborhoods through “green” methods and technology (\$5,600,000 over two years)

1. Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Construction Trade: \$100,000 over one year; \$200,000 over two years
 - a) Possible Grantee: Job Opportunities Task Force Inc. (JOTF)
 - b) Rationale: Construction trades will be in high demand as a result of the federal economic stimulus funding that will be distributed to states, including Maryland. To enter the sector, individuals must do an apprenticeship, typically a four-year commitment. Construction employers are often reluctant to offer apprenticeships to people with criminal convictions or poor people. Conversely, these individuals often lack the skills necessary to enter an apprenticeship program. In order to bridge this gap between construction employers’ needs and the skills of potential employees, JOTF designed a pre-apprenticeship program for the construction trade in 2006.

2. Entry Level Jobs with Advancement Potential in Healthcare for People with Criminal Convictions: \$100,000 over one year; \$200,000 over two years
 - a) Potential Grantee: Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare
 - b) Rationale: Jobs in the healthcare field are still thriving despite the economic recession. Many people with criminal convictions and low-income Baltimoreans, however, do not have access to these jobs because they lack the skills needed to qualify for them. Some hospitals in Baltimore, such as Johns Hopkins University Hospital, already are training and hiring people with criminal convictions for work in the healthcare field. This funding will be used to provide job training and placement to individuals interested in entering the healthcare industry. Specific jobs may include nursing aides, home healthcare aides and pharmacy technicians.

3. Employment Opportunities for Persons who are Homeless or have Criminal Convictions: \$100,000 over one year; \$200,000 over two years
 - a) Possible Grantee: Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Inc.
 - b) Potential Match: Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and other foundations
 - c) Rationale: Downtown Partnership of Baltimore currently employs forty-nine Clean Sweep Ambassadors who are formerly homeless or incarcerated individuals. The Partnership provides these individuals not only with jobs but with services and assistance such as financial workshops, help with obtaining

a GED and attending community college, support in obtaining a MD State drivers license, housing assistance, etc. The Clean Sweep Ambassadors receive benefits and develop life skills. The Partnership would like to hire more persons who are homeless and/or have criminal records. The Weinberg Foundation has committed \$100,000 payable over two years.

4. Re-entry/Reintegration Services for Baltimore Residents with Criminal Convictions: \$700,000 over one year; \$1,400,000 over two years
 - a) Potential Grantees: Prisoners Aid Association of Maryland, Episcopal Community Services of Maryland, Living Classrooms Foundation, Marian House, Power Inside, Alternative Directions, Inc., and National Women's Prison Project
 - b) Potential Match: Empower Baltimore Management Corporation federal funding
 - c) Rationale: Thirty percent of the 9,000 prisoners returning to Baltimore City each year settle in six high-poverty neighborhoods. Taking advantage of America's belief in "second chances," the Fund would support community-based organizations that provide supportive services (e.g., job training and placement, housing, and life-skills training) to individuals who are released from prisons or have criminal convictions. Some grants would be targeted to organizations that specifically serve women with criminal convictions as they often have key economic responsibilities as heads of households and custodial parents.

5. Employment of Baltimore City Public School Youth Outreach Workers to reduce violence and need for additional police in Baltimore's most troubled schools: \$480,000 over one year; \$960,000 over two years
 - a) Possible Grantee: Child First, BUILD
 - b) Potential Match: Baltimore City Public Schools and DOJJCP
 - c) Rationale: Baltimore City Public Schools has made substantial strides in addressing the overuse of suspension and poor school climate. However there are several middle and high schools with increasing levels of truancy, violence and gang membership, due in part to the deteriorating economic situation of city families and communities. Rather than increasing the police presence in these troubled schools, the Community Engagement Office of the City Schools has developed an innovative program that employs experienced youth workers and community leaders who have significant "street" credibility. These Youth Outreach Workers greet, mentor and monitor students, link them to needed services, visit homes, defuse conflicts and protect them from violence. The program is currently operating in three schools and was slated for expansion, but due to the reduction in public and private resources, its future is in question. This grant would fund the salaries of youth workers in three schools who, due to their expertise and dedication, are the key to the program's success.

6. Retaining Key Summer School Program Staff: \$250,000, \$500,000 over two years
 - a) Possible Grantees: Building Educated Leaders for Life, SuperKids Camp; Middle Grades Partnership; Higher Achievement; Center for Summer Learning
 - b) Potential Match: Baltimore City Public School System, TBD
 - c) Rationale: More than 100 years of research on summer learning loss shows that high quality learning opportunities are desperately needed if Baltimore's children are to be successful in school and life. Summer programs have been increasing in quality and quantity over the past ten years, partly due to the support and advocacy of OSI-Baltimore and its grantees. The economic downturn has reduced funding for summer programs, resulting in fewer program slots for children and fewer summer program jobs for teachers, advocates, and youth development staff. As a result, some children will no longer receive the nutrition, safety and educational enrichment that these summer programs provide. This grant would provide funding to Baltimore's highest quality program providers, who have been essential to raising expectations about the types of opportunities that are possible and modeling high quality summer program design. In particular, the grant would support the salaries of high quality staff who will not be retained, due to lack of current funding.

7. Green Jobs Training and Placement for Low-Income Baltimoreans: \$1,000,000; \$2,000,000 over two years.
 - a) CivicWorks, Living Classrooms, Jobs Opportunities Task Force
 - b) Potential Match: Baltimore City Weatherization Fund and Local Energy Efficiency Block Grant (from federal government), TBD
 - c) Rationale: A number of non-profits already have programs in place to teach entry level workers weatherization, lead-abatement, deconstruction, and maintenance skills. Stimulus money for weatherization is defined narrowly in the federal stimulus package; OSI support could broaden the skills included in job training courses to include work on roofs, furnaces and green renovation. This would not only immediately put Baltimoreans to work but provide them with training in an expanding field. OSI will work closely with the city and key non-profits to maximize the use of stimulus funds in this initiative.

B) Employment opportunities for older youth and re-engagement of school drop-outs, as preparation for work as adults and as an alternative to employment in drug markets (\$3,350,000 over two years)

1. Employ 200 Baltimore City high school youth year-round: \$1,100,000 over one year; \$2,200,000 over two years; matched at least 3:1.
 - a) Possible Grantees: Baltimore City Foundation, Safe and Sound Campaign and Center for Summer Learning
 - b) Potential Match: AARA Youth Employment Funds to Mayor's Office of Employment Development , TBD
 - c) Rationale: More than 70% of the families of Baltimore City Public School children are classified as disadvantaged. These families live on the economic

margins in the best of times, and are even more vulnerable now, in a time of economic hardship. Youth jobs are essential to bolster family incomes, but also to ensure that youth have opportunities to learn job skills in the legitimate economy. These funds would build on the nearly \$6 million city and federal of the students who participate in Youth Works, the City's six week, 20 hours/week program, to include 10 hours per week of paid employment during the school year. In addition, the grant would be designed to complement the Education and Youth Development Program's current goals, creating jobs that:

- (i) pay youth to learn and engage in youth advocacy and organizing (e.g. The Algebra Project, Wide Angle Media), and who are paid to work at youth serving organizations (e.g. Baltimore Urban Debate League, Unchained Talent);
- (ii) allow youth to attend needed summer credit recovery/high school exam programs and be employed during the summer and school year;
- (iii) and employ two job developers to work throughout the year to increase the quality and quantity of jobs available for youth in the summer 2010.

2. Stipends and Salaries for Educational Services, Job Training and Employment Opportunities for Juvenile Court-Involved Youth: \$575,000 over one year; \$1,150,000 over two years.

- a) Potential Grantees: Family League of Baltimore City, Inc., Operation Safe Kids, Chesapeake Center for Youth Development
- b) Potential Match: Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention and Maryland Department of Juvenile Services
- c) Rationale: Juvenile court-involved youth typically have dropped out of school and are unemployed. In Baltimore City, youth who are arrested are often charged with robbery, theft, or narcotics distribution. All of these offenses involve the gain of money or materials that these young people do not have. In an attempt to remove the economic incentive for engaging in criminal activities, this funding will be used to support programs that offer juvenile court-involved youth with social supports (including educational services), job training and employment opportunities.

C) Healthcare for people who are drug-dependent or who are homeless. (\$3,000,000 over two years)

1. Increased Access to Primary and Mental Health Care: \$550,000 over one year; \$1,100,000 over two years;

- a) Possible Grantees: Healthcare for the Homeless; other Federally Qualified Health Centers
 - b) Potential Match: Federal Stimulus Funding, Baltimore Mental Health Services, Homeless Services, TBD
- Rationale: Due to these dire economic times, healthcare visits to Healthcare for the Homeless and other local Federally Qualified Community Health Centers have increased dramatically. The increase is due to the fact that many people have lost their health insurance along with their jobs and the numbers of homeless have increased because of the

foreclosure crisis. Healthcare for the Homeless and other community health centers see all patients regardless of their ability to pay, putting a large financial and clinical burden on the health centers.. By focusing on enrolling eligible patients in Medicaid and Primary Adult Care public insurance, the clinics will be able to bill for services and create a revenue stream that, in turn, will increase the number of patients they can treat. The grant would provide funding for caseworkers to increase access to public benefits, funding for billing assistance, financial management assistance, additional psychiatric staff and, importantly, outreach services (to reach clients in shelters, soup kitchens or the streets). There is a great unmet need for mental health services, especially now as many of those suffering from mental illness may not be able to afford care due to loss of insurance.

2. Diversion of Individuals Buying Small Quantities of Drugs to Treatment in Lieu of Arrest: \$300,000 over one year; \$600,000 over two years
 - a) Grantee: Downtown Partnership in conjunction with the Baltimore Substance Abuse System and the Baltimore City Police Department
 - b) Possible Match: Downtown Partnership, TBD
 - c) Rationale: There is an uptick in drug arrests at a downtown outdoor pedestrian mall (Lexington Market). The Baltimore City Police Commissioner stated his willingness to divert low level drug buyers to treatment instead of arresting them. A team of outreach workers who partner with the police department to identify individuals who may benefit from treatment and assist those individuals to access it. Grant funding would be used to create a diversion protocol, police and outreach trainings, and hire people in recovery to serve as outreach workers.

3. Maintain Addiction Treatment for Needle Exchange Participants: \$100,000 over one year
 - a) Grantee: Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems
 - b) Possible Match: City Needle Exchange Funding
 - c) Rationale: The Baltimore City Needle Exchange has always coupled needle exchange with access to addiction treatment. Because of state and local budget shortages, the Needle Exchange Program has cut a portion of its treatment capacity, resulting in over 25 clients losing access to care in the short term. Bridge funding would restore these treatment slots until enhanced Primary Adult Care—which includes a treatment benefit—goes into effect next year. A benefit specialist will help eligible clients sign up for Medicaid or Primary Adult Care, eventually making this project self-sustaining.

4. Case Management to increase access to addiction treatment, primary care, and other case management services: \$350,000 over one year; \$700,000 over two years
 - a) Grantee: Baltimore Healthcare Access
 - b) Possible Match: TBD

- c) Rationale: It is difficult during boom years for people with addiction backgrounds to secure addiction treatment, employment, and continual medical care. During times of recession it is even harder. Employers have large pools of people from which to choose and often will not accept the person with a chronic health disease, especially addiction. Case managers would work to help people enter and remain in treatment while also focusing on their other needs including housing, employment and family reconciliation. The project is somewhat timely because, in an effort to decrease the state budget gap, the legislature cut addiction funding and also moved a large portion of the addiction treatment block grant for the uninsured over to the Primary Adult Care medical benefit. This maneuver allows a federal match for the Primary Adult Care benefit, providing the state with extra funds to add a treatment benefit to Primary Adult Care.
5. Mental Health Services Outreach: \$60,000 over one year and \$120,000 over two years
- a) Possible Grantee: Mental Health Policy and Leadership Institute
 - b) Possible Match: TBD
 - c) Rationale: This project brings a full range of mental health services to communities which suffer disproportionately from depression, trauma and related disorders. While it is often recognized that there is a direct correlation between poverty and depression, few patients seek treatment and mental health providers do little to outreach and serve these clients. Project Connections responds to this dilemma by bringing treatment to the community. During its initial stages, it found that the majority of patients also needed addiction treatment. In an effort to increase access, OSI-Baltimore funded one project site to provide buprenorphine to eligible patients, allowing the sites to provide both mental health and addiction treatment at the same time. This funding would allow another project site to provide addiction treatment, expanding access to addiction treatment in the community.
6. Supportive Housing for people in Addiction Treatment: \$190,000 over one year and \$380,000 over two years would allow 50 clients a year to have supportive housing during their 6 week treatment period.
- a) Possible Grantee: Baltimore Area Supportive Housing; Baltimore Homeless Services; Baltimore Substance Abuse Services
 - b) Possible Match: Homeless Services Stimulus funding; HIDA funding, TBD
 - c) Rationale: Baltimore area has always had a housing shortage. However, the foreclosure crisis has exacerbated the problem. Lack of housing, especially if coupled with joblessness, can lead to increased depression and a higher use of illicit drugs. Studies show that addiction treatment is more successful if the client has housing and employment. By coupling supportive housing with outpatient addiction treatment, the city will offer its clients a higher chance of treatment success.

D) Improved access to public benefits and to legal services relating to housing, public benefits, and employment (\$1,350,000 over two years)

1. Earn Benefits Services for Baltimore City Detention Center Adult Inmates:
\$150,000 over one year; \$300,000 over two years
 - a) Possible Grantees: Baltimore SEEDCO; Baltimore Healthcare Access; and/or Single Stop
 - b) Potential Match: Annie E. Casey Foundation and/or Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice , TBD
 - c) Rationale: Approximately 35,000 people are released into the community from the Baltimore City Detention Center after being detained pre-trial for several months and in some cases years. Many of these individuals will be rearrested within three years. Two contributing factors to these high incarceration and recidivism rates are mental and/or physical impairment and limited employment opportunities. Earn benefits services will serve detainees who are 60 days away from being released from jail. These services will include the completion of applications to access basic needs programs such as food stamps, Medicaid and primary adult health care.

2. Legal Services to Help Low-Income Baltimoreans Access Public Benefits and Protect Housing and Employment Rights: \$400,000 over one year; \$800,000 over two years
 - a) Possible Grantee: Legal Aid Bureau; Homeless Persons Representation Project; Public Justice Center
 - b) Potential Match: Maryland Legal Services Corporation, TBD
 - c) Rationale: Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts is down from \$6.8 million to \$2 million for 2009, a significant source of funding for public legal services throughout the state. Yet, as outlined in Deepak's memorandum, solving legal issues relating to benefits, housing, and wages often has a "multiplier effect" because of their significance to a family.

3. Legal Services to Help Immigrants Protect Employment Rights: \$150,000 over one year; \$250,000 over two years
 - a) Possible Grantee: CASA de Maryland
 - b) Potential Match: TBD
 - c) Rationale: Immigrants, especially those who are undocumented and working as day workers, are especially vulnerable to having their rights abused during an economic downturn. Support both to provide legal protection and to help maintain a Workers Center that establishes terms of work and screens employers would help to ensure that immigrants are fairly paid and treated at employment sites.

E) Small Grants Pooled Fund to Assist Vulnerable Baltimoreans (\$1,200,000 over two years)

1. Small Grants Fund for Organizations Addressing the Health and Economic Stability of the Most Vulnerable Baltimoreans: \$600,000 over one year; \$1,200,000 over two years

- a) Possible Grantees: Associated Black Charities
- b) Potential Match: Annie E. Casey Foundation
- c) Rationale: This is an established small grants fund that the Annie E. Casey Foundation has located at Associated Black Charities in order to strengthen its philanthropic capacity. Grants would support non-profit organizations helping individuals meet the employment, food/nutrition and housing needs of low-income Baltimoreans. Appropriate organizations established by Baltimore Community Fellows could be supported through this funding pool.